

# LEATHERHEAD IS THE **BUSINESS**



Six good reasons to do business in Leatherhead & District



“A key part of transforming our company into a winning, competitive business was to have one head office that brings all our people into a positive working environment.”  
**Alan Walters, Vice President (VP) Human Resources, Unilever, which moved its head office to Leatherhead in November 2008.**

## OUTSTANDING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

The Greater South East region, in which Leatherhead is centrally placed, is often described as “the powerhouse for the rest of the UK economy”. The region is the single largest contributor to the UK economy and the number one location in the UK for Foreign Direct Investment. Home to around 750,000 businesses and 16 universities, the South East is generally advanced, high-income, highly skilled, broadly-based and service-oriented.

### BUOYANT LOCAL ECONOMY

Leatherhead is one of the main commercial centres of the Mole Valley District supported by the villages of Ashted, Bookham and Fetcham. The local economy is buoyant, with unemployment levels among the lowest in the UK. Studies by the Henley Centre show that the District performs well in terms of key economic growth drivers, e.g. industrial structure, quality of the labour force and social capital. Multi-national corporates, membership organisations and innovative small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have chosen to locate in the area including:

- Buchanan & Curwen: based in Leatherhead since 1907, specialising in the design and installation of electrical and security systems.
- ExxonMobil: the world’s largest publicly traded international oil and gas company is celebrating 20 years in Leatherhead.
- Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR): one of the world’s premier engineering, procurement and construction companies.
- Logica: a business and technology service company, employing 39,000 people across 36 countries.
- Prowse & Company Ltd: an established and respected public relations and marketing consultancy.
- The Police Federation of England and Wales: a staff association for all police constables, sergeants and inspectors.
- Unilever: relocated over 1,000 employees in 2008 to a new UK head office in Leatherhead.
- Wates Group: entered the Sunday Times 100 Best Companies to Work For list for the first time in 2010 and received a special award for ‘Giving Something Back’.



#### Did You Know?

Leatherhead is at the western apex of the Gatwick Diamond sub-region. Visit [www.gatwickdiamond.co.uk](http://www.gatwickdiamond.co.uk) for more information.



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## EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION LINKS

Leatherhead enjoys multi-modal connectivity with the UK and international business destinations. It is less than 20 miles from central London and at the hub of a major travel network. Its road, rail and air links ensure UK, European and global markets are easily accessible. Yet only a few minutes away lie the North Downs, an outstanding area of woodland and chalk downland, and a site of special scientific interest. The town provides access to a large pool of potential employees, with more than ten million people living within one hour's travel.

The proximity of Heathrow and Gatwick airports creates access to global markets and technological skills which are driving high rates of economic growth.

### BY AIR

The UK's two largest international airports, Heathrow and Gatwick, are within 25 miles of Leatherhead via the motorway network. Heathrow, the world's busiest international airport, is less than one hour's drive away whilst Gatwick Airport, the UK's second largest business airport, with 80 airlines serving over 200 destinations, is within a 30 minute drive.

### BY ROAD

Junction 9 of the M25 London Orbital motorway is just half a mile from Leatherhead town centre, providing access to all parts of the UK: the North (A1, M1), South (M3, M23), East (M2, M20, M11) and West (M4, M40). The A3 major regional trunk road is less than 10 miles away via the M25, giving access to the coast at Portsmouth and to central London.

### BY RAIL

The frequent direct service to London (Waterloo, Victoria and London Bridge) takes around 45 minutes. Other destinations easily accessible by rail include Horsham (29 minutes) and Guildford (26 minutes).

### Did You Know?

Leatherhead is less than one hour's drive from major towns such as Brighton, Basingstoke, Reading, High Wycombe, Watford and Luton.

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# Q&A WITH EXXONMOBIL

ExxonMobil's UK headquarters has been based in Leatherhead since 1990 and forms an integral part of the region's wider community. Here, Stella Crossley, Community Affairs Adviser explains the reasons behind the multinational's move to Leatherhead and subsequent involvement in the neighbourhood:

## **1. When did ExxonMobil move its UK headquarters to Leatherhead?**

The move from Esso's office in central London was phased in between June and October 1990. At that stage the building provided the UK's headquarters for Esso's downstream activities in which crude oil is refined into products, distributed and marketed. Since then, the building has seen the arrival of former Mobil staff following the merger between Exxon (Esso's parent company) and Mobil in 1999, and in 2007 the building was refurbished and improved to accommodate the arrival of the merged company's upstream activities, which include exploration, development, production and gas marketing.

## **2. What were the reasons for the move?**

A decision was made to move out of Central London and a study took place to identify the best location.

We analysed where our employees lived (to cause the least disruption) and identified transport links, both for employees and for visitors to our office, including colleagues from abroad and from our refinery at Fawley, which is within reasonable travelling distance. One of the deciding factors in favour of Leatherhead was the good communications provided by the M25, which had recently opened, providing easy access to and from Heathrow and Gatwick.

## **3. How many employees are currently based in the Leatherhead offices?**

We have just over 800 employees and approximately 200 contractors based here. Of these, 160 employees live in the KT22 postcode area, but many more live in neighbouring villages and towns, such as Ashted, Epsom, Dorking and Reigate.

## **4. How is ExxonMobil involved in the local community?**

We believe that businesses have an important role to play in supporting the communities where they operate. We have seven Link Schools in the area, with which we work to promote the subjects of science, technology and maths. In Leatherhead we have also built a strong relationship with many local charities by making donations and putting in teams of employees to help with various activities during our annual Days of Caring, from painting and decorating to conservation work.



We also encourage employees and their families to get involved in volunteering in their own time, through a scheme in which they can apply for grants to support the organisations with which they choose to work. Examples include school governors, scout leaders and marathon runners.

Anyone who has visited our site in Leatherhead will know that we take the safety of our staff and our neighbours very seriously. For a number of years now we have sponsored Safe Drive Stay Alive, a hard-hitting stage show aimed at young drivers, which highlights the consequences of driving dangerously. Organised by Surrey Fire and Rescue, it includes a filmed reconstruction of a road traffic collision and personal accounts from those involved in the accident and its aftermath. The show aims to cut the number of young people killed or injured on our roads.

Our employees also contribute to the local community by voting for a local Charity of the Year, and then raising money for that cause over 12 months through raffles, quizzes and a small levy on one-day sales here in ExxonMobil House. Last year, our staff raised more than £7,500 for the Surrey Community Development Trust, which provides support and accommodation for more than 1,300 homeless and vulnerable people in Surrey.

This year, the Charity of the Year is the Leatherhead-based Rainbow Trust, which provides support to families who have a child with a life threatening or terminal illness.

#### **5. Why did ExxonMobil decide to back the Leatherhead and District Business Awards?**

We are committed to supporting the local communities where we operate. ExxonMobil is one of the largest employers in the town and we have worked closely for many years with the co-hosts Mole Valley District Council and the Leatherhead & District Chamber of Commerce. We are committed to the highest standards in our own operations and so we were delighted to sponsor these awards, which recognise excellence in local businesses.



**Did You Know?**  
Over the last 125 years, ExxonMobil has evolved from a regional marketer of kerosene in the U.S. to the largest publicly traded petroleum and petrochemical enterprise in the world.

## GROWING AND DIVERSE ECONOMY



Surrey boasts the largest and most diverse concentration in the UK of the world's leading headquarters for knowledge industries, information technology, telecommunications, biotechnology and advanced engineering, outside London.

Since the 1990s, Leatherhead & District's business community has grown dramatically. Serviced office and business park developments provide state-of-the-art accommodation for small to medium-sized businesses and corporates alike.

## RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY FOCUS

Clustered within a quarter of a mile of each other on the North Western outskirts of Leatherhead are a number of businesses with a research and technology focus.

Cobham Technical Services (formerly ERA Technology) works at the leading edge of advanced aerospace technology consultancy and design and has been in the town since the 1920s. Cobham's products and services have been at the heart of sophisticated military and civil systems for more than 75 years.

Just down the road is Leatherhead Food International (LFI), an independent organisation delivering innovative research, scientific consultancy and regulatory guidance and interpretation. Leading IT and business services company Logica is also located on one of the nearby business parks.

## AT YOUR SERVICE

Successful companies have, in turn, attracted a range of service organisations to the town, from accountancy, legal and financial services practices, through to specialised marketing and training consultancies.

Leatherhead now numbers several region-wide professional services firms, including accountants Menzies and law firm TWM Solicitors. The private bank Brown Shipley, which offers advice in areas such as investment management and pensions to high net worth individuals, has offices in Leatherhead. Other financial services firms based locally include pension administration service provider MNPA and global benefit and human capital consulting and outsourcing firm Mercer.

As one of Surrey's leading law firms, with an office in Leatherhead for many years, we believe our reputation and contacts make us a sensible choice for businesses considering relocating to the area.

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# Q&A WITH UNILEVER

A newer arrival to the region's business community is the multinational fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) corporation, Unilever. The home of brands such as Flora, Walls, Marmite, PG Tips, Persil and many more, moved its UK and Ireland headquarters to Leatherhead in November 2008. Here, Alan Walters, VP Human Resources, takes us through the decisions behind the move and the benefits it has had on the business.

### **1. What were the reasons for the move?**

In 2006, we started the process of merging three companies into one. Previously, our people were spread over three different sites - Crawley, Walton and Kingston, which collectively formed our UK head office. A key part of transforming our company into a winning, competitive business was to have one head office that brings all our people into a positive working environment.

### **2. How does the Leatherhead site fit with Unilever's global operations?**

Globally we sell products in more than 170 countries, with over 270 sites operating to a turnover of approximately €40 billion worldwide.

Approximately 1300 people are based at the Leatherhead site. We have a total of 17 sites in the UK and Ireland that consist of:

- 7 offices
- 8 factories
- 2 research and development sites

### **3. Does Unilever use local venues for corporate entertainment and employee events?**

Yes. The teams based in Leatherhead use a range of internal and external meeting facilities every week. For example, we have visited Denbies Wine Estate, Woodlands Park Hotel and Wotton House.

### **4. How has Unilever become involved in the local community?**

We seek to make positive contributions in areas where we operate, engaging the talent, resources and expertise of our people and partners to invest in projects that benefit our local communities. We like to work in partnership with others and look to share our expertise as a way of making a positive impact.

Before we moved in, and since November 2008, we have spent time with key local stakeholders to really understand where our expertise matches a community need.



Our community investment programme focuses on the area of diet and health as does our business. In the first 18 months of being in town, we piloted a number of healthy eating school workshops and an initiative called Fit Business. This is an internal healthy workplace programme that we have extended to the Chamber of Commerce. It focuses on different aspects of health and offers comprehensive health checks. We have a number of teams that regularly complete local team challenges in charities and/or organisations, such as building vegetable gardens in local primary schools. Already we've donated well over 600 hours of our time.

We have also provided more than 100 Vitality bags, which are reusable, recyclable hessian bags filled with Unilever products, to aid local fundraising, such as fairs, raffles and auctions. These are commonly used for school fairs and PTA organised events.

##### **5. How does Unilever utilise innovative arrangements for travel planning to minimise impact on local traffic/parking etc?**

We have a green travel plan based on agreed targets with the local council that we aim to achieve by 2013. We actively encourage our employees to take public transport as their preferred commute to and from the office.

We do this through financial support and employee discounts with public transport providers.

Most of our employees are flexible home workers. Therefore, they will spend one or two days working from home and are able to travel outside rush hour when they do come into the office. We have approximately 500 parking spaces and use a parking management system to manage parking allocation. Our people have to book in advance if they want to park at the office. We have therefore been able to maximise utilisation of spaces, and minimise unnecessary journeys to the office.



##### **Did You Know?**

Unilever sells products in more than 170 countries, with over 270 sites operating with a turnover of approximately €40 billion worldwide.

## HIGHLY SKILLED LABOUR POOL



A key ingredient in economic success is a healthy labour market and a well-educated workforce. This is particularly critical in the context of the South East region's knowledge economy.

The South East region has a highly qualified workforce, with a significantly higher percentage of its population educated to degree level than in the UK as a whole, and the rate for Surrey is even higher than for the South East. In 2007, in the Greater South East region, 38% of the population had a degree compared to just under 31% of the UK as a whole. Companies located in Leatherhead have access to a large pool of skilled labour, with over 10 million people living within one hour's drive or train journey. Many people who might otherwise commute to work in London are persuaded to adopt an easier journey to work at a location that is often nearer their home.



### Did You Know?

Education within Surrey is highly rated, outperforming other parts of the UK against the National Targets for Education and Training. The published 'Schools Performance Tables' show 58.8 per cent of the county's pupils achieved 5 or more GCSE grades A\*-C, which compares favourably with the national average of 49.8 per cent.



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REASON

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## EXCELLENT LIFESTYLE

“There is always something cultural going on in Leatherhead. Now in its seventh year, the Leatherhead Drama Festival sees the town celebrate its theatre and thespian talents for a fortnight”

**Dick Jones, Organising Committee Member, Leatherhead Drama Festival and Director, Jones’ Creative Services Limited.**

### **OUTSTANDING COUNTRYSIDE**

Leatherhead is set among the chalk hills of the North Downs, with Sites of Special Scientific Interest such as Box Hill and the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty nearby, offering opportunities for walking, mountain biking and horse riding. The River Mole runs through the town and offers a relaxing riverside stroll and the opportunity to spot insects such as dragonflies and damselflies, as well as nesting birds.

### **TOWN CENTRE FACILITIES**

The pedestrianised shopping centre in Leatherhead is an important part of the town's overall character. It has around 150 shops and other retail premises, including major names such as Sainsbury's, Boots, Next and Dorothy Perkins. The centre hosts a popular twice weekly street market with locally sourced produce and boasts a vibrant café culture, offering a wide variety of restaurants and independent cafés.

The outlying villages of Ashted, Bookham and Fetcham also have high street shops, which are important focal points for their local communities. Larger retail centres at Epsom, Guildford and Kingston are within easy reach.

On the leisure front, the town offers an excellent choice of restaurants and pubs and the Leatherhead Leisure Centre is well known for the quality and range of its sporting and recreational facilities. The District Council has invested in a £12.6 million refurbishment which will include a brand new state of the art fitness suite.

There are also a number of private health and fitness clubs located in the area including Nuffield Health, which offers members a range of group exercise classes, fully equipped fitness area and a swimming pool. For those looking to reap the benefits of exercising outdoors, Ashted-based sports shop, Run to Live, organises local running groups for all levels.

Leatherhead's location places London's bright lights, its cultural scene and the Sussex coast within easy reach. Closer to home, the Leatherhead Theatre is a cultural hub for the town and has been located in the centre since the 1950s. More recently, it has been building on its proud

heritage so that it is not only a venue for fine theatrical productions but also a vital social centre at the heart of the community.

### **DRAMA FESTIVAL**

Every year, in May, the Leatherhead Drama Festival takes place at the Theatre under the patronage of local celebrity Sir Michael Caine. This is the largest drama festival of its kind in the UK, featuring three plays on most evenings. Junior and Senior drama groups from the region, as well as visitors from the broader South East, compete for the coveted 'Sir Michael Caine Drama Awards', presented by the legendary actor himself.

### **HISTORIC LEATHERHEAD**

Leatherhead Museum traces the history of the town from its beginnings in about 880 AD. Exhibits span the ages and include Anglo Saxon items, a model of a Roman villa originally situated in Ashted, and 20th century items made by Goblin (of teasmade fame), whose factory stood on the site now occupied by ExxonMobil. The Museum is located in quaint 17th century Hampton Cottage.



#### **Did You Know?**

Leatherhead appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 as Leret and its assets rendered the princely sum of £1.

## STRONG LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS



The Leatherhead & District Chamber of Commerce has more than 100 Members, including a wide variety of local businesses ranging from sole traders to companies with over 2,000 employees.

The Chamber exists to protect and promote members' interests, meeting the challenges and opportunities in Leatherhead's rapidly developing business environment. It is housed in Fetcham Park House, a grade II listed building, originally constructed in 1705.

Working together with Mole Valley District Council, the Chamber helps to promote the region's businesses and to create a favourable business environment for the burgeoning business community.

Together with headline sponsors ExxonMobil, The Leatherhead & District Chamber of Commerce, Mole Valley District Council and The Leatherhead Area Partnership Ltd supported the launch of the Leatherhead & District Business Awards in 2009. Six category winners were celebrated at the Awards Ceremony in January 2010.

“Leatherhead is recognised as an ideal location to live and do business. The surrounding area provides a magnificent backdrop to the thriving commercial community.”

**John Hickey, President, Leatherhead & District Chamber of Commerce.**



### Did You Know?

The gardens at Fetcham Park House were originally designed by “Capability” Brown.



*“ a strong voice in the community,  
working in partnership with the Local Authority,  
Business Link and Action for Market Towns, providing  
a strong and critical representation for our members ”*

**The Leatherhead & District Chamber of Commerce** is very proud to sponsor the town marketing campaign represented in this brochure. The aim of this initiative is to attract new companies and highlight the growing and friendly business community, which the Chamber actively promotes and supports.

***Our members benefit from:***

- Business development seminars
- Regular and popular networking events
- Promotion via Chamber website
- Local advertising opportunities
- Member to member marketing

*In addition to acting as a key focus for local businesses, the Chamber manages a successful high street market, held on Thursdays and Saturdays; with the occasional international food market.*

**[www.leatherheadchamber.co.uk](http://www.leatherheadchamber.co.uk)**



# LEATHERHEAD IS THE **BUSINESS**

From high tech industries to professional services and from multi-nationals to SMEs, businesses of all types have chosen to locate in Leatherhead. At the hub of the transport network, with good links to London, major roads, rail services and airports, it is one of the best locations for business in the South East. With a dynamic arts and leisure scene and good shopping facilities all set against the backdrop of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, your staff will love it too.

**For more information visit [www.molevalley.gov.uk](http://www.molevalley.gov.uk)**



# Mole Valley District Council

## Helping business work ...

Mole Valley is the perfect place for business and leisure.

Gatwick and Heathrow airports, the centre of London or the South Coast are all within reach in less than an hour. Conference facilities are available at Dorking Halls or at a selection of venues across the District.

When you're not at work, walk from the hustle and bustle of Dorking or Leatherhead within minutes to the tranquillity of the picturesque countryside or the wooded Surrey Hills. Enjoy a variety of leisure time activities on offer at theatres, cinemas, arts events, beautifully maintained parks and open spaces, and leisure centres.

Mole Valley has attracted blue chip, financial, manufacturing, insurance, travel and service businesses and is the base for a number of UK and multi-national headquarters.

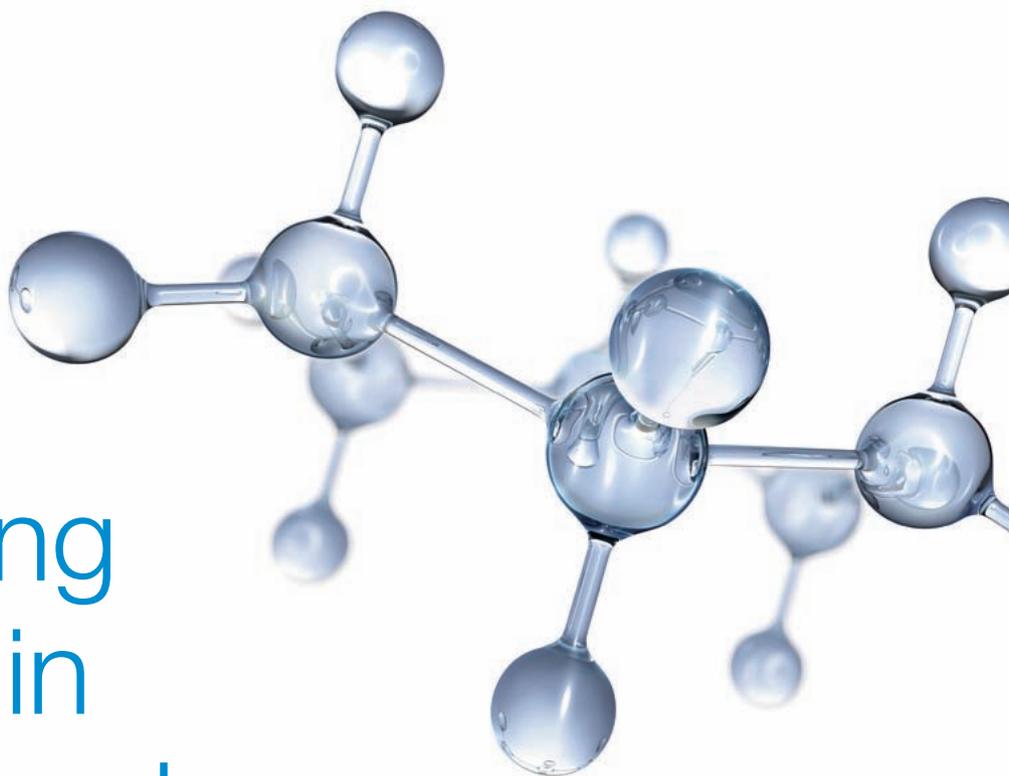
Recent surveys show that Mole Valley is the safest district in the safest county in England to live and work. Nearly 90% of residents are satisfied with Mole Valley as a place to live and people enjoy healthy lifestyles, putting Mole Valley amongst the best in England.

- PLANNING
- POLICY
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- ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
- LEISURE CENTRES
- PARKS AND OPEN SPACES
- TOWN MANAGEMENT
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



For more information on any of these go to  
[www.molevalley.gov.uk](http://www.molevalley.gov.uk) or call 01306 885001





# Celebrating 20 years in Leatherhead.

More than 1,000 people work at ExxonMobil House in Leatherhead which, over the past 20 years, has become the centre for our major operations in the UK, continental Europe and further afield.

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